

Student jailed for 'sextortion' involving Miss Teen USA

March 17 2014

A US student was jailed for 18 months Monday for hacking online accounts of Miss Teen USA and over 100 other women in several countries and threatening to publish nude photos of them, prosecutors said.

Jared James Abrahams surrendered in September to FBI agents probing so-called "sextortion" cases, in which he made demands in return for agreeing not to release the pictures.

The investigation involved multiple victims in California, as well as in Canada, Moldova and Russia.

The 20-year-old Abrahams, who hacked into as many as 150 online accounts and forced victims to engage in Skype sessions in which he convinced two teenagers to undress, made a plea deal with [prosecutors](#) in November.

He pleaded guilty to four counts—three of extortion and one of computer hacking—according to the US Attorney's office in Los Angeles.

The most high-profile victim was Cassidy Wolf, who won the Miss Teen USA pageant in August. She and Abrahams attended the same school in Temecula, about 90 miles (150 kilometers) southeast of Los Angeles.

They left the school in 2012. The [plea agreement](#) detailed how, starting

last year and continuing until June, the computer science student hacked into computers, email and social media accounts.

The pictures, sometimes nude in nature, were taken from webcams, said the plea deal, adding that Abrahams "extorted at least 12 young women in their late teens or early 20s in this manner."

Wolf called investigators in March after receiving threatening emails containing nude photos of herself.

The sender said he would distribute the pictures "all over the Internet" unless she either sent him a personal video of herself, joined him on Skype for a five-minute video chat during which she would have to do whatever he said, or sent him "good-quality pics" of herself.

"As digital devices, email accounts and social media accounts now contain the most intimate details of the public's daily lives, the impact of this type of hacking and extortion becomes more pronounced," prosecutors wrote.

"In some cases, this type of criminal behavior can be life-changing for the victims—especially for vulnerable victims who may feel it is impossible to rebuild their tarnished reputations."

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